

Rev. Rogers's

4487. h: 2.

Mr. Parsons's

ELECTION-SERMON

MAY 27, 1772.

1843

RECEIVED

Mr. B. B. B.

ELIZABETH



RECEIVED

1843

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT CAMBRIDGE

BEFORE HIS EXCELLENCY

THOMAS HUTCHINSON, Esq;
GOVERNOR:

HIS HONOR

ANDREW OLIVER, Esq;

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR,

THE HONORABLE
HIS MAJESTY'S COUNCIL;

AND THE HONORABLE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

OF THE PROVINCE OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS-BAY in *New-England*,

MAY 27th 1772.

BEING the *Anniversary* for the ELECTION
OF HIS MAJESTY'S COUNCIL for said Province.

BY MOSES PARSONS, A. M.

Pastor of the Church at NEWBURY FALLS. K

B O S T O N :

PRINTED BY EDES AND GILL, PRINTERS TO THE
HONORABLE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MDCC,LXXII.

In the House of Representatives,

May 28, 1772.

RESOLVED, *That Col. Gerrish,
Mr. Hobson and Mr. Lothrop,
be and hereby are appointed a
Committee to wait on the Rev'd Mr.
Moses Parsons, of Newbury, with the
Thanks of this House for the Sermon
delivered by him Yesterday before the
General Assembly; and to desire of him
a Copy thereof for the Press.*

Attest,

Samuel Adams, Clerk.



AN
ELECTION-SERMON.

PROVERBS XXI. 1.

*The King's heart is in the hand of the
Lord, as the rivers of water : he
turneth it whithersoever he will.*

ALL nature through all her works
proclaims a Deity. Inspiration con-
firms this point ;—*For the invisible
things of him from the creation of
the world are clearly seen, being understood
by the things which are made, even his eter-
nal*

nal power and Godhead :* they must then be without excuse, who say there is no God ; for verily there is a God who judgeth in the earth.

As we acknowledge the being and perfections of God ; so we receive the doctrine of a universal providence—that the Lord reigneth—that his providential kingdom ruleth over all—and that he worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will.†

If a sparrow falls not to the ground without his providence ; we may conclude, those more important changes which pass over men, are under his ordering and direction.

'Tis the instruction of wisdom, that we should acknowledge God in all our ways ; that our steps may be directed by him.†

THE right management of the important concerns of this day,—reminds us of our duty in this respect.—And a blessed privilege it is, that we may have access through a Mediator, to that glorious Being who is the fountain of knowledge ; and humbly ask for, and believingly expect the bestowment of,—that wisdom which is profitable to direct —

* Rom. 1. 20. ; Eph. 1. 11. † Prov. 3. 6.

direct—even that wisdom of the prudent, which is to understand his way—that our public affairs being under divine direction, may be crowned with desired success.

IF the sun of prosperity has been made to shine upon us—or the day is become gloomy and dark—we are to consider these events, as taking place, under the providential government of the Supreme Ruler of the world; who *wills many changes for us*, tho' he is himself unchangeable.

IN the words before us, we are taught, *that, The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of water—He setteth up Kings, who formed the Rivers, and directed what courses the water should run in—Not, that the hearts of subordinate Rulers, or of all men, are not in his hands; but, that those who are exalted as gods among men, who are seated at the upper end of the world; are yet under the government of the Most High.*

HE makes use of men as instruments in his hands, to execute the purposes of his providence and grace.—Men may be set up by him as Kings, advanced to the chief seat of government, under the influence and direction of his providence—And the blessings of
of

An Election-Sermon.

of their administration, may be as useful and beneficial as Rivers of water.

As the heart of the King is in the hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of water—so 'tis added—He turneth it whithersoever he will—that is—He turneth the King's heart as he pleaseth—'Tis more under his direction and controul, than the Rivers of water are under the power of men, which may be turned into different channels by them.

Now, as a King implies a kingdom and subjects, government and the administration of it—And as Rivers of water have their important use and end in the kingdom of nature ;—And as both of these are said to be in the hand of the Lord, given by him for valuable purposes—I hope the *Metaphors* will not be overstrained, if we allow the words to suggest to us the following truths.

THE universal dominion of God, that all hearts, times, seasons, changes and events are in his hands, or under his direction and controul.—The origin, design, importance, necessity and advantage of good civil government—The happy case of a people, who are thus favoured of God; for they are as a land well watered with rivers, and enjoy privileges which are great

great and invaluable.—A good civil government may be altered, the Rivers of water may be turned into other channels, or may become bitter; or the administration of government may become injurious and oppressive to the subject—And in both these cases—either when we enjoy the advantages of good civil government, or find that it is altered and become grievous—we are to acknowledge the righteous and supreme Ruler and Governor of the world, who orders prosperity and adversity for us; and can turn the rivers of water into their right channels, when they have been diverted from their proper courses; or remove all our public difficulties, and make us a happy people.

I would take some notice of each of these.

In the first place. The words suggest to us—*The universal dominion of God, that all hearts, times, seasons, changes and events, are in his hands, or under his direction and controul.*

THE King's heart is in the hand of the Lord. By the heart here, is intended, the mind, will and affections—the King himself,
B
with

with all his secret springs of action, with all his arcana imperii, or secrets of government, whatever he is—whatever he has—whatever he does. The royal preacher indeed says—*The heart of Kings is unsearchable.** They may have their secrets of government—“ designs which are kept private, and reasons of state (as One has it) which private persons are not competent judges of, and therefore ought not to pry into.” But the hearts of earthly Kings “ notwithstanding their powers and prerogatives, as much as the hearts of common persons, are in the hands of the King of Kings. Those that are most absolute are under his government.—They may have the prerogatives of their crown, but the great God has them not only in his eye but in his hand.”

AND as the great Ruler of the universe, has the hearts of Kings, so he has the government of Kingdoms in his hands. He who made the world governs it—All events in the kingdom of nature, providence and grace, are under his ordering and direction. The pious Psalmist, in the believing consideration of the universal providence and dominion of God, expresses himself after this manner, *My times are in his hands.†* And so are all the changes and events that pass over, or
take

* Prov. 25. 3.

† Psalm. 31. 15.

take place upon, nations, kingdoms, particular societies, or individuals. Although it may be a dark and difficult day with the professing people of God,—yet—*The Lord reigneth ; He sitteth upon the flood, in the most stormy tempestuous season—Yea the Lord sitteth King forever.**

ALTHOUGH there is so much sin in the world, yet a righteous and holy God reigns. Although he is infinitely distant from all sin, yet he has permitted it to come into his creation, and abound among men. This is the day of his patience, which is exercised even unto long-suffering ; and he knows how to govern and over-rule all events, to the advancement of his own glory, and good of his people.

THE purposes and designs of the King of Kings are indeed unsearchable. *None can by searching find out God. † His way is in the sea, and his path in the mighty waters. —Clouds and darkness are round about him, —But of this are we assured—that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, ‡ The Judge of all the earth cannot do wrong. He now rules in righteousness, and he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ. When the secrets of all hearts,*

B 2

shall

* Psal'm 29. 10.

† Job 11. 7.

‡ Psal'm 27. 3.

shall be disclosed, when men and things will appear just as they are, and every one receive according to his works.—

IN a second Place, I come to take notice—*That the words suggest to us, the origin, design, importance, necessity and advantage of good civil government among men.*

THESE things are intimated, by a King's being set up among men, by the King of Kings, for the purposes of government—And the blessings of a good administration described by Rivers of water which were form'd by him, and designed for the benefit of mankind.

IN the language of the Prophets,—Waters often denote a great multitude of people. Thus the Prophet has it—*The Lord bringeth upon them the waters of the river,* * that is—The Assyrian army.—And so the blessings which flow down to a people, from the throne, when it is established by righteousness, are beautifully illustrated by Rivers of water; which have their use in the kingdom of nature, and serve important purposes among men.

A

* Isaiah 2. 7.

A LAND without water, without Rivers of water, wou'd scarce be habitable, and serve, but for a retreat for wild beasts,

THE great country of *Egypt*, receives its supply of water from a River. Its fertility is owing to the flowings of the *Nile*, which diffuses it's fatness through all their fields, being let into them by proper *Canals*; whereby they yield plenty of grain; which otherwise would be but burning blowing sands.

A PEOPLE without civil government, or in a state of nature, are in an unsafe condition.—The depraved wicked world we live in, renders civil government necessary, for the safety and welfare of society.

THROW down the walls of civil government, and to what evils and dangers, thefts, rapines and murders are we continually exposed? We could not call any thing we possess'd our own; for he who had the longest sword, would plunder for himself. We could not be safe, from those who thought they might injure us in our most valuable interests, and yet escape unpunished.

THE consequences of an arbitrary tyrannic government, are yet more distressing—
When

When the will of the Prince is the law of the Subject—When life, liberty, and property lie at the mercy of a *Despot*;—And the nod of the tyrant brings on an execution, by the *bow* and the *string*. Such an administration of government is like an inundation or landflood, which carries all before it—The subject is left to *groan* in poverty, slavery and misery.—

THE blessings a people enjoy who are favored with good civil government, are not to be described—they are like Rivers of water, reviving and refreshing—Highly favored of God, are a people who are thus distinguished!

This leads me,

IN a third place—to take notice—that the words suggest to us, *The happy case of a people, who are thus favored of God, for they are as a land well watered with Rivers, and enjoy most valuable privileges.*

THE righteous or godly man is said to be *planted by the Rivers of water*, * “by the means of grace, here called the Rivers of water.” We have an expression similar to this—*There is a river, the streams where-*

of.

* Psalm i. 3.

*of shall make glad the city of God.** The covenant of grace, the precious promises of the gospel, and the graces and comforts of the Spirit, are the streams which make glad the city of our God.—“God’s word and ordinances are rivers and streams, with which God makes his saints glad in cloudy and dark days.” Yea the blessed God himself, is said to be to his church and people, a place of *broad Rivers and Streams.*†

As the word and ordinances of God are blessings to his church and people, which are described by *streams* and *rivers*---so the blessings of good civil government, are beautifully represented, by the same metaphor, *when judgment runs down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream;* ‡---the blessings which flow down from the throne, under such an administration of government, make glad the hearts of the people, who are planted by these rivers of water, or enjoy the benefit of them.

I HAVE been ready to look upon the British nation, as this happy people—That we had the best plan of civil government, of any nation or people under heaven.—That the King of Kings had smiled upon us in a peculiar manner, in thus distinguishing of

US.

• Psalm 46. 4. † Isaiah 33. 21. ‡ Amos 3. 24.

us. The over-ruling gracious providence of God is to be acknowledged by a people when this is the case. *When he by whom Kings reign, and Princes decree justice, setteth up Kings who are publick blessings in their exalted stations.*

THE names and memories of some of those Worthies, whom the great Ruler of the world, in his kind providence placed on the British Throne, will be dear and precious to this people, so long as we have any just apprehensions of the advantages we enjoyed under their happy administration.

KING William *the third*, of glorious memory, is regarded by us as the happy instrument in the hand of God, of delivering the nation from *Popery* and *Tyranny*—In his auspicious reign our Charter was granted, which contains our rights and privileges—which have been dearly bought by us—honestly paid for—which we have an undoubted claim to, and I hope in God shall never be deprived of them.

KING George *the first*—and *the second*, are Princes, who are spoken of with high esteem and honor. The blessings which flow'd from the throne, while they sat upon it, were as rivers of water, reviving and refreshing--

freshing---Their administration was like rivers in the desert, or streams in the wilderness---We rejoiced as a happy people under their mild and gentle reigns.

HIS present Majesty ascended the throne of his royal ancestors, amidst the joyful acclamations of his subjects---His way to the throne, (if I may be allowed the expression) seem'd to be *pav'd with hearts* ; so great was the affection of his people for him. His Majesty gloried in the name of *Briton*---And the whole nation gloried, in having a Prince born and educated among them, who was to wear the Crown, and sway the Sceptre. Scarce ever a Prince ascended the British throne with equal advantages to do good, and to render his people happy under his administration.

How could we wish that bright day had continued clear and serene !

BUT the scene is changed---Grievances are complain'd of---In Great Britain---In Ireland---In America---In this Province.---The day is become gloomy and dark, and the waters are troubled.

THIS brings me in the

C

FOURTH

FOURTH place, to take notice, that the words intimate—*That even good civil government may be altered, the Rivers of water may be turned into other channels, or may become bitter ; or the administration of government may become injurious and oppressive to the subject.*

'Tis true, the Rivers of water may be shifted into other channels, and the water remain the same. Government may be administered in some different form, and yet answer all the happy purposes intended by it.—The waters may be like a rapid river, which cannot be passed with safety ; or, like a river which overflows it's banks, and threatens danger to all who are within reach of it—(and it is alarming when this is the case) Yet, the river may become still and quiet ; the waters may subside, and get and keep within their proper limits—Or the waters may be troubled by those who live near them, and enjoy the benefit of them, which may yet become calm and serene.

AND it is as true, in this state of things, that administration may change—A King may be *misled* by evil counsellors—He may be *corrupted* by bad ministers, and give into those measures which are *injurious* to the subject.—The liberty of the subject may be
thought

thought too great—Despotic principles may look fair—and a King under a limited monarchy may desire to become independent and absolute.

KING James *the second*—when Duke of York, was heard to say—that he had rather reign one month as the King of France did, than his whole life, as his brother Charles the second did—Unhappy Prince!—When he came to the throne---notwithstanding his coronation oaths, he acted upon his Popish despotic principles, till he became obnoxious to the English nation, *who oppos'd his measures*, which brought on the happy Revolution, when the Prince of Orange was advanced to the British throne.

ADMINISTRATION may be *altered* by subordinate Rulers, by bad ministers, who are intrusted by the King to conduct the affairs of government. Bribery and corruption may have great Influence;---and a nation may be even sold, to satisfy the ambition and avarice of wicked men.

THE Complaints heard among us; *are*; not *only*, that the Rivers are *shifted* into other Channels, *but* that the waters are become *bitter*,---*yea*---that the waters are become *bloody*---Or those measures have taken
C 2 place,

place, which in their consequences have been distressing---

OUR difficulties are of a public nature---they are known by us---they tenderly affect us---and make a deep impression on our minds---

WHAT I have in design, is, an humble attempt to lead this people to a suitable acknowledgment of the righteous over-ruling providence of God, and to conduct towards him in a becoming manner under all our public difficulties.

I come then, in

THE fifth and last place, to take notice that the words suggest to us--*That in both these Cases---either when we enjoy the Advantages of good civil Government, or find that it is altered and become grievous ; We are to acknowledge, the righteous and supreme Ruler and Governor of the world ; who orders prosperity and adversity for us ; and can turn the Rivers of water into their right channels, when they have been diverted from their proper courses ; or remove all our public difficulties, and make us a happy people.*

THESE

THESE things are intimated ; as all the events which take place among men, and the changes which pass over them, are under the dominion and government of God, who expects that we regard his works and the operation of his hands.

THE great blessing of good civil government is to be thankfully received.—A people thus distinguished, are under the greatest obligations to acknowledge the favor of the King of Kings, who has thus smiled on them in the dispensations of his providence towards them.

GOD has done great things for our nation. Under the smiles of his Providence we are become a great and powerful People, and are indulg'd with those privileges and advantages, which demand our grateful notice and regard.

GOD has done great things for these British Colonies—Great things for this Province—He brought our Fathers into *this then howling wilderness* ; he protected them, when they were few in number, and expos'd to the greatest hardships and dangers—He watched over them for good, and caused them to take root, to spring up and increase, and become *so* great a people, as we are at this day.

W^e

WE enjoy a precious gospel---The word and ordinances of God ; the means of grace and salvation ; which are designed to promote our everlasting good, that we may be happy here, and blessed in the coming world.

WE are a people favored of God in many respects ; and the privileges and liberties we enjoy of a civil and religious nature, call upon us to study what we shall render to him for all his benefits. If the day is become gloomy and dark, yet we have many mercies to be thankful for, which must not be forgotten by us.

BESURE it becomes us *to acknowledge God* in this day of public difficulty ;—for it is his hand which is lifted up and stretched out against us. Do we think we have reason to complain of men, that they have been our enemies without cause ? that we have been misrepresented—falsely accused—and treated after an injurious manner ?—that our liberties have been invaded, and hostile measures made use of, to bring us to submit to things which are grievous ? Whence do all these things take place ?—Are not all means and second causes in the hands of the supreme Ruler and Governor of the world ? Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord
hath

hath not done it?—Shall there be the evil of affliction and punishment, and the Providence of God not concerned in it?

I AM not here justifying the practice of wicked men; or that those can be excused from great guilt, who have acted an unrighteous part towards us;—but that they will meet with deserved punishment.

BUT the conduct of Divine Providence is to be justified—God is not the author of sin, he cannot be tempted with evil, neither does he tempt any man to sin.—He may suffer, or permit such things to be done, which are sinful or wicked, and yet be holy and righteous.

WITH respect to our behaviour, as subjects to King George, or as inhabitants of this province, whereby we claim Charter privileges—I believe we have as much to plead in our favour, as any part of the King's dominions, or as any people upon the face of the earth. We have ever been loyal and dutiful subjects. There is not, I suppose, a native of this Province, who does not bear unfeigned loyalty to king George *the third*, and wish prosperity to the illustrious house of Hanover.

GREAT

GREAT-BRITAIN is indebted to those pious and bold adventurers, who first took possession of Plimouth and Massachusetts colonies for her first settlements in America.*

WE can't say, she would have had any American Colonies—*Nor can we think*, her empire would have been so extensive in this part of the world; had not this people performed, what future generations will scarce believe possible.

THE Charter governments have many things to plead in their favor—And this Province in particular—For if any people under Heaven, might expect to be smiled on by their Sovereign, nourished, cherished and rewarded by the Mother Country, we might justly look for such treatment.

THAT

- * 'Tis granted, that there were some attempts in order to make a settlement in Virginia in the year 1613. But the settlement was so small, and laboured under such discouragements, that it would very probably have been given up; if those who began it, had not been encouraged by the other Colonies: So that this Colony may be look'd upon as the spring and rise of the rest.—As an honorable Historian observes—“Virginia in its infancy was struggling for life, and what its fate would have been if the Fathers of it in England had not seen the rise and growth of other Colonies near it, is uncertain.”

Governor Hutchinson's History of the Massachusetts-Bay, Vol. 1. page 3.

THAT great man, Mr. Agent Dummer, in his defence of the Charter governments, has set their services, and sufferings in the common cause, *in a true point of light*, up to his time—But it would require volumes to recount all that this people have done, to settle and support themselves *as a people*, without any charge to Great-Britain; and what they have performed, to *secure, defend and enlarge* the British dominions in this part of the globe. What numbers of men, of the flower of our men, have been sacrificed in this cause! What vast treasures of blood and money have been expended, whereby we have often been brought low, and must have been utterly discouraged, if we had not been supported by a powerful and gracious providence!

WE have had the approbation of our Sovereign, and of the British Parliament, on several occasions in years past. And we hope the time will soon come, when it will appear that we have not done any thing, to forfeit either the favor of the one, or confidence of the other; but have acted the part of loyal and dutiful subjects; tho' we cannot submit to shackles and chains, so long as we have a just right to the privileges of freemen.

D

But

BUT although we have so much to plead in our favour, when we consider our conduct towards our Sovereign and our Parent Country——Yet must not our mouths be stopped, when we review our behavior towards the King of Kings, and consider what has been done offensive and displeasing to the Most High?

ALTHOUGH the divine laws are published with all their solemn sanctions; and human laws enacted and executed, to suppress vice and wickedness; yet sin has broke over all bounds, and like a deluge overspread the land. There are sins, and aggravated sins too, which are found *even among us*, against the Lord our God. Does not iniquity abound——infidelity——deism——profane swearing and cursing, and taking God's name in vain——sabbath breaking——intemperance——debaucheries——murders——and all kinds of wickedness? Are there not those sins found among us, for which a land should mourn? Sins, which are the reproach of a professing people, and threaten their ruin.

HAS not the Son of God many enemies among us, who reject him in his person, offices and benefits; and will not that he should reign over them? Is not a precious gospel despised, a great salvation neglected, and

and the day and means of grace sadly abused?

'Tis impossible for us to conceive how hateful sin is to God!—He is jealous of his honor, and will not be mocked. Sin is rebellion and treason in his sight; and we may not think, but that he is angry with those who rob him of his honor, and deny him that love, obedience, trust and confidence, which he justly expects from his professing people. When we survey our errors, apostacies and declensions, what corruptions there are in doctrine, and immoralities in practice, we may wonder at the patience and long-suffering of God, and say, that he is punishing of us far less than our sins deserve; for his judgments might have destroyed us like an overflowing flood.

MAY we give honor to God, by acknowledging of him in a suitable manner, at this day.

IT becomes us to own our entire and absolute dependence upon him, that we are in his hands; or that he hath a rightful and universal dominion over us.

WE entirely and absolutely depend upon God; for, 'tis in him that we live, move and

have our being. We are not only under the controul of his power, but are bound by the authority of his law, to love him, and live devoted to him. 'Tis what is justly insisted upon and expected, that men of the highest, as well as lowest order, should submit to him, who on his vesture and on his thigh has a name written—King of Kings, and Lord of Lords—for the government of the world is put into his hands for the good of his Church, who must reign, and will reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet; and those who will not bow to his sceptre of mercy, shall be broken with his rod of iron.

THE holiness, righteousness and justice of God, in the dispensations of his providence, are to be confessed by us.

THE blessed God has been pleased to distinguish us on account of privileges, both of a civil and religious nature; he has brought us near to himself, and own'd us as a people. But will outward privileges secure or defend us, if we behave amiss? We are told they will not. Said the Most High to his once favor'd people; *You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for your iniquities.*

ties. 'Tis not said, therefore I will con-
nive or wink at your sins : but therefore I
will punish you for them. The sins of a
professing people are very offensive in the
sight of Heaven. And God has many
judgments in store with which he may
punish a backsliding sinful people. We
should ascribe righteousness to the great
Ruler of the world, under the darkest dis-
pensations of his providence ; for the Judge
of all the earth will always do right.*

*THE voice of God in his providential
dispensations towards us, must be attended to,
or it concerns us to search out and put away
the cause of the divine controversy with us,
that so the effects may cease.*

THE great Governor of the world has
no unmeaning providences : His judgments
are loud calls to repentance. We find the
Prophet in God's name, speaking thus to his
professing Israel of old—*The Lord is with
you, while ye be with him : if ye seek him,
he will be found of you ; but if ye forsake
him, he will forsake you.†* The blessed God
does not leave a professing people, before
they leave him. When he visits a people
with affliction, or sends his judgments on
them, he expects that they search and try
their

* Amos 3. 2.

† 2 Chron. 35. 2.

their ways and turn to him. Thus a professing people are instructed, by the mouth of a holy Prophet ; as what would be the conduct of that God towards them, in whose hands they were, as clay in the hands of a potter.

AT what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it : If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil, that I thought to do unto them. †

THOSE judgments which are not ruining, are calls to repentance ; and happy is it for a people, when God humbles them, and proves them, and does them good in the latter end, by the adverse dispensations of his providence towards them.

AND,

IT is the reasonable duty of this people, (as well as their privilege, safety and happiness,) to give honor unto God, by an humble believing trust and confidence in him, who is able to bestow upon us all the blessings and salvations we stand in need of.

SHOULD

† Jer. 18. 7, 8.

*SHOULD not a people seek unto their God?** This has been the conduct of the professing people of God, under all their publick difficulties; to wait on him, to hope and trust in him, and by faith, prayer and repentance, put themselves under his gracious care and protection. *Our fathers (says the Psalmist) trusted in thee, they trusted,—and thou didst deliver them: they cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.†*

OUR Fathers, who first came into this wilderness, were a pious and praying people. Their refuge was in God; they made him their fear and dread; they sought him in seasons of danger and distress; and he appeared for them, as a God, who has never said to the praying seed of his praying people, seek ye me in vain.

BUT perhaps some may be ready to ask —Are means to be neglected or not made use of?—To this I answer—'Tis but presumption to think of trusting in God, and neglect means, while means are in our power to improve.

THE best means, the most vigorous persevering endeavors are to be made use of, to help

* Isaiah 8. 19.

† Psalm 22. 4, 5.

help ourselves, when we are in danger, or under difficulties. But then, don't we stand in need of direction in this case? Are not *means, instruments and second causes* in the hand of God? And can they be any more to us than God is pleased to make them? In the chapter from whence my text is taken, we are taught, that *there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord.* And although *the horse is prepared against the day of battle, yet safety is of the Lord.**

"There can be no success against God; and therefore we must never act in opposition to him, in contempt of his commands, or in contradiction to his counsels." "Although we should think, (as one expresses it) that we have wisdom, and understanding, and counsel, the best politics and politicians on our side; yet if it be against the Lord, it cannot prosper long, it shall not prevail at last."

"THERE can be no success *without* God; and therefore we must never act but in dependance upon him. Be the cause never so good, and the patrons of it never so strong, and wise, and faithful; and the means of carrying it on, and gaining the point, never so probable, still we must acknowledge God; and make it our great concern

* Context, 30, 31.

concern to engage him our friend and secure his favor." He can save without means, but means cannot save without him.

OUR help must then be in the name of the Lord, for he can save us—The hearts of Kings, and Governors, and of all men are in his hands—"God can (as one notes upon the text) change mens minds, can, by a powerful, insensible operation upon their spirits turn them from that they seemed most intent upon, and incline them to that, which they seemed most averse to, while his Providence does not put any force upon the native freedom of man's will, but directs the course of it to serve his own purpose."

WHAT instances of the power and success of prayer, are found in the sacred pages! which are design'd for direction and encouragement to the people of God, in all ages and generations, that they may see that *the Lord reigneth*, and that all hearts and events are in his hands.

AMONG the many things that might be said, I would mention but one instance; and that is the case of the twin brothers.

ESAU came out in a hostile way against his brother ;—his heart was full of revenge, and now (thinks he) the time is come, that he would execute what he had long purposed to do——Jacob was in distress at the news of his approach, and used the best means he cou'd to pacify his brother—But he improves the blessed liberty of prayer ; he found the way heaven-ward open, tho' dangers crowded thick upon him—He seiz'd the struggling angel and refused to let him go without the blessing——What a speedy and remarkable answer was given to his prayer !—When they came in view of each other—Esau ran to meet his brother, embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. What a change or alteration is here ! The heart which just before was full of revenge and murder, now glows, with brotherly love and cordial affection.

How easy is it with the sovereign Disposer of all events, to change the face of our public affairs, and remove whatever is just ground of complaint !——He can take *the wise in their own craftiness, and turn the counsel of Abithophel into foolishness*—He can say to the most troubled waters, *be still*, and a calm will ensue—He who has all hearts in his hands, can bring Rulers and
People

People to a right temper and disposition to each other, and engage them to pursue the important ends of their respective stations and relations.

ALTHOUGH instruments or second causes, are no more than God is pleased to make them ; yet, it is with him to improve them unto happy purposes — And he who advances men to posts of honor, and places of rule and government among men, can influence and dispose them, so to fulfill the important trusts reposed in them ; that they may prove ministers of God, for good to his people.

AS the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord : So, are the hearts of all those, who are employ'd by him, in conducting the affairs of government : And we may hope and expect, that they will approve themselves just men, ruling in the fear of God ; as they are in his hands, or promoted by him to be Rulers among men.

FROM intimate connections—thorough knowledge of our civil and religious affairs, —and from great abilities, may we not justly form high expectations—That his *Excellency*, whom God in his providence has ad-

vanced to the chief seat of government among us ; will employ his superior talents, and extensive influence for the public good —That he will be a Father to this People, and a friend to his native Province and Country——

MAY we not expect that vice will be frown'd upon by him—Learning and virtue encouraged—and the religion of Jesus Christ promoted.

THAT his administration will be like the *waters*, of a constant flowing—gentle—placid *stream* or *river*—which are *refreshing* and *enriching* ;—whereby the hearts of this people, and these churches of the great Redeemer may be made glad.

MAY his Excellency have much of the divine presence with him—be accepted among the multitude of his brethren—And not only enjoy the smiles of his Royal Master—but approve himself to the Ruler of Rulers, and meet with his gracious approbation in the great day of account.

OUR civil rulers, are regarded by us as our political fathers, who will naturally care for us ; as their interest, welfare and happiness,

piness, and of their posterity, are so closely connected with ours.

OUR eyes are turned upon the
GENTLEMEN of the Council, and House
of Representatives—

FOR, under God, this people confide in
you ; that our public affairs in this difficult
day, will have your best attention.

THE Election of his Majesty's Council,
which is before you this day ; is a privilege
which through the smiles of heaven we
yet enjoy—May this important affair be so
conducted by you, as that this people may
reap the advantage of it.

'Tis with you to chuse such men, as
you are fully satisfied, will answer the im-
portant purposes of their election. Men
who fear God—who understand the times,
or discern both time and judgment—who
know what ought to be done, and the fittest
season to do it in.

HONORED Rulers—By you our laws
are framed—And we look on you as the
Guardians of our rights and liberties ; that
you

you will pursue the best measures (in humble dependence on God,) to have whatever is ground of just complaint removed, that our invaluable privileges may be secured and defended : *That our peace may be as a river, and our righteousness as the waves of the sea.* Those will be found to be the best friends to Government, who are the best friends to the Constitution, or are concerned that government is justly administered.

It requires wisdom, prudence, and firmness of mind, to withstand any undue administration——But we depend upon you ; that your best endeavors will not be wanting to keep the waters in their right channels—to prevent them from rising above their proper limits—and to have them run clear and serene—that this people may enjoy the benefit of a good administration, and gratefully own and improve the same.

In your public characters, we trust, it will be your concern, to approve yourselves just men, ruling us in the fear of God ; pursuing the best measures, to advance the honor of God, the interest of Religion, and the best good of this people. And in the whole of your conversation, exhibit every
Christian

Christian grace and virtue ; and by your examples encourage and enforce whatever is virtuous and praise-worthy.

YOUR day of usefulness will come to an end, when you must resign, not only your posts of honor, but your breath to him, in whose hand it now is.

DEATH will soon throw down all these outward and civil distinctions among men ; when we must give an account to him, who is the supreme Judge ; and receive from him our final sentence, adjudging us to happiness, or consigning us to ruin.

MAY you now honor him, who is able to confer immortal honors upon you !— May you be faithful unto death, and then receive a crown of life !

MY Reverend Fathers and Brethren in the ministry, will permit me to stir up their minds by way of remembrance, that they may be excited to duty and diligence therein.

WHATEVER embarrassments attend our civil affairs, yet our religious privileges are continued. The word and ordinances of
God;

God, which are rivers which make glad the Church of God, are yet enjoyed by us.

IT should be, and I trust is, our concern, faithfully to dispense the word, and duly administer the ordinances of the gospel; that those who are planted by these Rivers, or enjoy the benefit of these waters, may become trees of righteousness, and bear much fruit to the glory of God:—And, that *instead of the fathers there may be the children*, a happy succession of converts, which may grow up as *willows by the water courses*, and nobly appear for God; when those who now are upon the stage of action are removed to the place of silence.

THE ministers of Christ should be men of prayer—they should be intercessors for the land, and prove as *chariots and horsemen*, the safety and defence of a people.

WE are directed to pray for *Kings and all in authority*—and should bear our civil rulers upon our hearts, at the throne of grace, that *they may be ministers of God for good to us; a terror to evil doers, and encouragers of such as do well*, that under their good administration, our people may
lead

lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour†.

WATCHMEN upon the walls, must not hold their peace—they must cry and not spare ; *must reprove* for what is amiss, and *warn* when danger is approaching.

MAY we be willing to spend and be spent, in the service of Christ, for the good of the souls of men, and see the pleasure of the Lord prospering in our hands ; while we recommend religion in the whole of our conversation !

MAY the glorious gospel, and the happy success of it, being accompanied with the gracious influences of the blessed Spirit ; be like the waters of the sanctuary, *a flowing increasing river*, till it has spread through the habitable world, demolished Satan's usurped empire, made the kingdoms of this world the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *and filled the whole earth with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas !*

F

MINISTERS

† 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2, 3.

MINISTERS as well as Magistrates, have but a limited day to work in; the night of death will put an end to our labours.—May we finish our course with joy, and be approved by our gracious Lord and Judge, as his faithful servants!

THAT the Lord reigneth is an alarming consideration to a sinful people. *The Lord reigneth, let the people tremble*—and they have reason to fear when the great Ruler of the world is angry, for it is easy with him to distress and destroy a wicked generation of men.

MAY this whole people consider, that it is of the last importance, that we are in good terms with the Most High, and have the supreme Ruler of the world, our Friend and reconciled Father in Jesus Christ! If he is our hiding place, in the day of evil, we shall be safe under his protection, for if he is engaged for us, who can be against us?

MAY *we fear God*—make him our fear and our dread! May we be a truly pious, penitent and praying people; that we may have him for our friend, whose favor is more to be valued, than the friendship of the whole world!

† Psalm 99. 1.

MAY

MAY *we honor the King!* Pay due regard to lawful authority, not be found troubling the waters, or preventing a due administration of government ; that no blame may be justly laid at our doors ; but, that a righteous God, may plead our just cause, when we are denied the privileges of loyal and dutiful subjects, while we demean ourselves as such !

MAY *we love the brotherhood!* Have a truly publick spirit, and seek the best good of that body of which we are members : That nothing may be wanting on our part, to promote our best peace and prosperity ! May there be a general and happy union in this respect ; to stem the torrent of vice and wickedness, and to effect a thorough gospel reformation of what is amiss !

MAY that glorious Being, who so evidently appeared the God of our Fathers, be our God and the God of ours ! May he graciously appear for us at this day, over-rule all events to the glory of his name and the best good of this people,—prepare us for his mercy—surround us with his salvations,—and make us that *happy people whose God is the Lord !* *

* Psalm 145. 15.

It is not the intention of the Government to
to make any change in the present law, but to
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a

It is not the intention of the Government to
to make any change in the present law, but to
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a
to make it more effective, by providing a



